Children's Services

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

This Business Plan for the three years commencing April 1, 2001 was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Government Accountability Act* and the government's accounting policies. All of the government's policy decisions as at April 3, 2001 with material economic or fiscal implications of which I am aware have been considered in preparing the Business Plan.

The Ministry's priorities outlined in the Business Plan were developed in the context of the government's business and fiscal plans. I am committed to achieving the planned results laid out in this Business Plan.

[ORIGINAL SIGNED]

Iris Evans, *Minister of Children's Services*
April 10, 2001

101-07259/

INTRODUCTION

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

The Children's Services Ministry has clearly heard from Albertans that all policy and planning decisions should be determined first and foremost by asking what is in the best interests of children. We have been listening. Through the Children's Forum, Youth Secretariat, Premier's Task Force on Children at Risk and consultations with First Nations and Metis leaders and agencies, the community has become an active participant in identifying priorities and proposing a course of direction for the Ministry's 2001-04 business plan.

The Ministry hosts the partnership for municipally based support services for Family and Community Support Services as well as serving the needs of vulnerable people. Municipalities benefit from solid work done in the areas of early intervention, preventive social services and development of local solutions to local priorities. Family members in need of protection against violence, neglect or any form of abuse will be provided access to shelter and other required supports. New areas of focus in the next three years also include the development of integrated, long-term strategies to ensure children with disabilities have access to specialized programs.

Our business plan is based on the principle that parents have the primary responsibility for children. It is grounded in the "Four Pillars" that led to the establishment of the Child and Family Services Authorities confirming integration of services; community-based service delivery; a focus on early intervention; and the improvement of the well being of Aboriginal children.

Through the integrated partnership of the Alberta Children and Youth Services Initiative, we have reviewed and prioritized recommendations from the Children's Forum and Task Force on Children at Risk Reports and these will be addressed over the next three years. The 18 Child and Family Services Authorities will build and improve on the services delivered at the local level to better meet the needs of children, youth and families in their communities by emphasizing early intervention and healthy beginnings.

On the national stage, Alberta will maintain its leadership role in the advancement of childhood well-being in the areas of early childhood development and youth initiatives. This work will involve building relationships with other governments, families and communities. We are committed to help protect vulnerable children. As a result, the business plan includes ongoing emphasis on protection for children involved in prostitution.

Preventing Fetal Alcohol Syndrome remains a key ministry initiative, and more development will occur through the Alberta Partnership on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. A number of Alberta Government ministries and community organizations are collaboratively developing initiatives to prevent this disability and to build community capacity for the care and support of those already affected.

Through the annual Great Kids Awards, we will recognize the outstanding contributions of children and youth in their communities and recipients will serve as informal advisors to the Ministry. The Ministry will also continue its collaboration with municipalities on the all night dance parties, Raves, to ensure these events are safe for our young people.

As Colleen Klein stated after the Children's Forum, "the Forum was not an end but rather a starting point – a starting point for the government and for all Albertans concerned about children".

This business plan sets the course to improve the well being of all Alberta's children as well as striving to achieve responsible results for vulnerable Albertans through efficient partnerships and professional services.

Iris Evans

VISION STATEMENT

Strong children, families and communities.

Our shared vision is an Alberta where children and youth are valued, nurtured and loved; developing to their potential, supported by enduring relationships, healthy families and safe communities. Alberta will be child, youth and family friendly.

MISSION

Working together to enhance the ability of families and communities to develop nurturing and safe environments for children, youth and individuals.

OUR PLANNING ENVIRONMENT

The Ministry is a dynamic and committed partnership between Child and Family Services Authorities, Family and Community Support Services, the Youth Secretariat, the Children's Advocate, the Aboriginal community and the Department of Chil 'ren's Services. In developing our Business Plan for 2001-2004, we recognize the involvement of our partners and stakeholders who share a common vision for Alberta children, youth and families and our shared accountability for achieving the goals set out in this business plan. The plan demonstrates the Ministry's on-going commitment to the Four Pillars.

The government business plan including the Government of Alberta's three core businesses: People, Prosperity and Preservation, guided the development of this plan. People as a core business are the primary linkage between the two plans. More specifically strategy #2 in the government business plan which states "children will be safe" is the focal point of the Ministry of Children's Services.

OUR SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY – PUT THE CHILDREN FIRST

Enhancing the capacity of communities to plan and implement services to meet the needs of children, youth and families in their area is a priority of the Ministry of Children's Services and will be achieved through program development assistance, training and partnership strategies. This community capacity building supports the Community-Based Service Delivery Pillar. A provincial accountability framework guides our partnership in the delivery of services to children, youth and families, and our partners are consulted in all major Ministry strategic planning. They help to establish the overall strategic direction for the Ministry and ensure that children, youth and families come first in the planning process.

The Ministry Business Plan, being grounded in the Four Pillars, establishes priorities as well as the overall strategic direction of government to ensure that Alberta's children, particularly those at risk, are safe, well cared for, successful at learning and healthy. These are based on the following community priorities:

- Planning and service delivery will be integrated at the community, regional and provincial levels to facilitate barrier-free access to services for children, youth and families (Integration Pillar).
- Community participation will be promoted in the delivery of services. The role of support networks and cultural groups will be integrated and expanded within the

professional delivery of service (Integration Pillar and Community-Based Service Delivery Pillar).

- Collaboration with Aboriginal communities in planning and delivering services for Aboriginal children, youth and families. The values, cultural and spiritual beliefs and customs of First Nations, Metis and other Aboriginal people will be respected and incorporated into services for Aboriginal children, youth and families (Aboriginal Pillar).
- Timely, accessible services will be available to assist and support children, youth and families to develop skills, to build on their strengths, and reduce the need for crisis intervention (Early Intervention Pillar).
- Support will be provided for community advocacy and development of programs focusing on prevention, preservation of families and positive relationships (Early Intervention Pillar).
- Services will be evaluated for cost effectiveness and timely delivery.

FIRST CIRCLE – UNITING FOR CHILDREN FORUM

The Children's Forum united a diverse group of stakeholders to identify and address issues facing children. Themes raised at the Children's Forum gave some direction to the development of the 2001-2004 Ministry Business Plan.

In addition, these themes have been reviewed by all ministries to work toward finding solutions both within individual ministry business plans, and through collaborative strategies. Over the next three years, Children's Services will be working to strengthen current initiatives that support these recommendations and developing new partnerships and innovative solutions to meet the challenges faced by Alberta children and youth.

TASK FORCE ON CHILDREN AT RISK

The Premier's Task Force examined issues affecting children at risk and made recommendations to ensure that their needs are met effectively. Based on these recommendations, Ministries will be building on successful strategies and services that address children's needs as they progress through all key transitional stages of growth and development. Children's Services will be placing a greater focus on strategies to identify at risk children earlier, and strengthening families' skills in parenting.

CROSS MINISTRY INITIATIVES

In partnership with other ministries, Children's Services participates in the Alberta Children and Youth Services Initiative. The aim of this initiative is to develop collaborative priorities and strategies to support Alberta's children and youth to be healthy, ready to learn, well cared for and safe.

Through the Aboriginal Policy Initiative, Children's Services will participate in consultation with other Ministries, to develop government-wide and department-specific strategies and performance measures intended to improve the well-being of Aboriginal people and the capacity of Aboriginal communities and organizations to address their own needs.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL INITIATIVES

The Ministry of Children's Services is working on ways to promote early childhood development in collaboration with the health sector and other governments. In addition, the Ministry is working with other governments and other Alberta ministries to:

- Implement the Early Childhood Development Initiative agreed to by First Ministers.
- Promote a national vision on childhood well-being through the National Children's Agenda.
- Reduce the depth of child poverty through the National Child Benefit Program.
- Continue involvement in the Prairie/Northern Partnership on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.
- Explore ways to improve child protection through inter-provincial protocols to reduce child victimization, including protection of children involved in prostitution.

SIGNIFICANT TRENDS, ISSUES AND COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

ECONOMIC TRENDS

Economic growth is expected to remain strong, which supports the well-being of Alberta families; however, it has also attracted many families to the Province, who may require Ministry support. The relatively weak agriculture sector has created stress on families in rural areas. In addition, there are issues of economic disparity. In 1996, over 45% of Aboriginal people in Alberta had a total household income of less than $25,000 compared with 26% of the non-Aboriginal population. The unemployment rate for Aboriginal people was 17.4% while the rate for the non-Aboriginal population was 6.8%.

DEMOGRAPHICS

While the total child population will begin to decline after 2001, demographic trends indicate that a greater proportion of children will be moving into the teenage years, emphasizing the need for increased supports to youth. Between 2000 and 2011, the Aboriginal population is projected to increase by 22%, versus 12% for Alberta's total population. The importance of this demographic group for Children's Services is evident in child welfare caseload statistics, which show that over one-third of children in care are Aboriginal.

SOCIAL TRENDS

Alcohol-related birth defects are a widespread problem and many families in Alberta continue to be affected by addiction issues. In Alberta, Aboriginal people represent 39% of the total inmate population in the criminal justice system. As of 1996, 4% of the Aboriginal population had attained a University degree compared with 14% of the non-Aboriginal population. This emphasizes the need for culturally appropriate and accessible services to ensure the well-being and stability of Aboriginal families and communities.

REGIONAL TRENDS

A number of provincial trends have been identified by Child and Family Services Authorities within their Business Plans, including:

- Social issues (suicide, family violence, incarceration, low income, unemployment, educational attainment) impacting Aboriginal children, youth and families, especially

Aboriginal youth, combined with a rapidly growing population, continue to challenge Child and Family Services Authorities to improve service delivery and encourage more participation from the Aboriginal population.

- An increase in the number of children involved in Child Welfare and Handicapped Children's Services and complexity of their situations.
- A shortage of foster homes and specialized placement resources, challenging the quality of placements for children and overburdening of foster parents.
- Shortage of qualified staff, creating human resource vacancies and placing increased pressures in service delivery.

MAJOR AREAS OF EMPHASIS

The following major areas of emphasis for the Ministry Business Plan are based on community priorities identified in the Child and Family Services Authorities' Business Plans, recommendations of the Children's Advocate, Children's Forum and Premier's Task Force on Children at Risk and areas identified for improvement through Ministry performance measures and research. Each of these areas of emphasis may be specifically based on one of the Four Pillars, but Early Intervention will be a focus across all areas.

ABORIGINAL SERVICES

Better outcomes for Aboriginal children, youth and families are the focus of the Aboriginal Pillar. By working with the Aboriginal community, other Alberta Ministries, and other levels of government to enhance the well-being of Aboriginal people in Alberta, these better outcomes will be achieved. Ministries will be working to develop government-wide and department specific strategies and performance measures to improve the well-being and self-reliance of Aboriginal people and communities.

PERMANENT LIVING SITUATIONS FOR CHILDREN

Ensuring continued connection to family and community is important for all children in permanent care. Strategies will continue to be developed to address children's need for stability and long lasting, nurturing relationships. This is the focus for a number of Ministry strategies aimed at preserving the cultural heritage of children in care, maintaining their connection to family and community after adoption, and helping them develop into healthy and happy individuals.

BETTER OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN IN CARE

Working with stakeholders, such as the Children's Advocate, toward a responsive system that meets the social, emotional and physical developmental needs of children in care through appropriate living situations and long-term planning.

YOUTH SERVICES

Youth must get the services they need, when they need them. Working through the Youth Secretariat, the Youth Advisory Panel, Youth Forum, Youth Focus Groups and as a partner in the Youth Employment Strategy, we will ensure that youth are active participants in identifying relevant issues and shaping Ministry priorities. In addition to improving outcomes for older adolescents that are involved in the child welfare system, the Ministry will work with our partners toward meeting the needs of adolescents with mental health issues and implementing strategies to assist at risk youth making the transition to adulthood. The Ministry will also work to ensure a smooth transition for children, youth and families

receiving services through Handicapped Children's Services to services provided through Community Development (Persons with Developmental Disabilities Community Boards).

BUILDING EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Developing consultation processes to strengthen and improve working relationships with the Aboriginal community as well as partnerships within Children's Services, other Alberta ministries and across all levels of government will continue to be a priority for the Ministry. We will continue to work with municipalities and Metis settlements to strengthen and support Family and Community Support Services so that local, preventive social initiatives enhance the well-being of individuals, families and communities.

MINISTRY GOALS, MEASURES AND STRATEGIES

Recognizing that the primary responsibility for children lies with the parents and caregivers, Alberta Children's Services provides leadership in building a high quality of life for Alberta children and families through its three core businesses. The core businesses support the Ministry's vision and mission as well as the Four Pillars and reflect the shared goals and accountability of Authorities and organizations, including the Department, that form the Ministry of Children's Services.

CORE BUSINESS 1: PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Children's Services works with Ministry partners, through the Four Pillars and more specifically the Early Intervention Pillar, to increase the ability of children to develop to their full potential, by providing prevention, promotion and early supports to children, youth and families. The long-term outcomes that will result for Alberta children, youth and families include:

Children and youth meet individual developmental milestones

- Children become competent, self-sufficient adults

Children, youth and families are healthy and self-reliant

- Children are physically, emotionally, spiritually, mentally and socially healthy
- Youth are able to make a healthy transition into adulthood

Goal 1.1:

To provide opportunities for children and youth to be challenged to reach their potential

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	TARGET
• Children and youth participating in childcare programs have their developmental needs met.	A. Percentage of childcare centres that meet critical standards.	100%

STRATEGIES

1.1.1 Support early intervention strategies and family supports for children at risk.
1.1.2 Continue to support the need for on-reserve early intervention and prevention programs.
1.1.3 Promote the implementation of readiness to learn measures for pre-schoolers.
1.1.4 Ensure that best practices for early childhood care and education settings are being shared, implemented, monitored and evaluated.
1.1.5 Initiate a new home visitation or mentoring program for parents of very young children and at risk families.
1.1.6 Examine new initiatives to improve the quality of child care programs.

Goal 1.2:
To provide a continuum of services to support and promote the well-being of children, youth and families

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	TARGET
• Families accessing Handicapped Children's Services report a positive impact on their families.	B. Percentage of families accessing Handicapped Children's Services who report the services are having a positive impact on their family.	New measure: baseline data under development.

STRATEGIES

1.2.1 Continue to enhance early childhood development strategies (0 to 6 Initiative).
1.2.2 Continue to enhance and implement a comprehensive, inter-provincial plan for the prevention, intervention, care and support of individuals with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effect.
1.2.3 Continue to promote initiatives that honour the cultural and spiritual needs of Aboriginal children, youth and families.
1.2.4 Conduct program evaluations and integrate the results into ongoing program planning.
1.2.5 Complete a Handicapped Children's Services complex case review to ensure that children are receiving supportive and high quality services.
1.2.6 In conjunction with the Youth Secretariat, work in partnership to enhance supports available to youth making the transition to adulthood, including transition to adult services such as those provided by Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD).
1.2.7 Collaborate with other ministries to provide a range of integrated health and related support services to children with special needs (Student Health Initiative).
1.2.8 Continue to work with other ministries to develop a comprehensive mental health system to address the mental health needs of children, including children in care (Children's Mental Health Initiative).
1.2.9 Collaborate with Child and Family Services Authorities to initiate mobile Community Response Team pilot projects to assist children, youth and families in crisis.

Goal 1.3:
To support positive, stable homes and ongoing, nurturing relationships for children and youth in care

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	TARGET
• Children in out-of-home placements stay connected to their family and community.	C. Percentage of children, in out-of-home placements, who maintain contact with families, relatives or communities where appropriate.	New measure: baseline data under development.
• Aboriginal children in out-of-home placements stay connected to their family and community.	D. Percentage of Aboriginal children, in out-of-home placements, who maintain contact with families, relatives or communities where appropriate.	New measure: baseline data under development.
• Children in care have stability in their lives.	E. Percentage of children residing in a stable, long-term arrangement within 12 months of Permanent Guardianship Order (PGO).	New measure: baseline data under development.

STRATEGIES

1.3.1 Support Child and Family Services Authorities to develop early support strategies of mentoring, peer support and extended support networks to ensure all at-risk children have access to nurturing adults.
1.3.2 Strengthen Permanency Planning Initiatives, such as the foster/adoption program, family ties and caring families to ensure that children in care have stable homes and enduring relationships.
1.3.3 Actively recruit adoptive families for special needs adoptions.
1.3.4 Develop the Custom Care and Adoptions Initiative in concert with First Nations agencies and Child and Family Services Authorities to improve permanency for Aboriginal children in care.
1.3.5 Implement revised Foster Parent's fee schedule.
1.3.6 Explore the implementation of the recommendations from the Youth Secretariat and the Youth Forums concerning mentoring opportunities for youth at risk.

CORE BUSINESS 2: KEEPING CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES SAFE AND PROTECTED

Through preventive approaches and services provided by the Child and Family Services Authorities, in support of the Early Intervention Pillar, the Ministry will continue to ensure that Alberta children, youth and families are safe and free from abuse and neglect. Ministry partners also work to prevent family violence, including supports for elderly people who are abused, and address its impact on children, youth and families. The long-term outcomes for Alberta children, youth and families are:

Children, youth and families are safe and free from abuse

- Children, youth and families will be protected from harm:
    - Children, youth and families have safe out-of-home care
    - Children are safe in their community
    - Parents practice safe child-rearing skills

Goal 2.1:
To protect Alberta children from abuse and neglect

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	TARGET
• Children in care stay free from abuse and neglect.	F. Percentage of children who stay free of abuse or neglect while receiving child protection services.	100%
• Increased coordination of services to families and children involved in prostitution.	G. Percentage of service providers reporting improved collaboration and coordination of services related to children involved in prostitution.	New measure: baseline data under development.
• Increased awareness by stakeholders that child prostitution is child sexual abuse.	H. Percentage of respondents to a public awareness survey who indicate that they are aware of activities undertaken by the Ministry and its partners to address issues affecting children involved in prostitution.	New measure: baseline data under development.

STRATEGIES

2.1.1 Support the capacity of First Nations and Metis settlements to deliver protection services and develop and use appropriate performance measures and standards for children in care.
2.1.2 Continue to develop and implement a risk assessment and reduction strategies in child welfare.
2.1.3 Evaluate the implementation of new Provincial Standards for service delivery for Child and Family Services Authorities.
2.1.4 Enhance services in the treatment and prevention for the protection of children as defined under the *Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution Act.*
2.1.5 Initiate a review of the *Child Welfare Act.*

Goal 2.2:
To reduce family violence and address its impact on children, youth and families

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	TARGET
• Albertans can access appropriate family violence services when needed.	I. Number of Child and Family Services Authorities that have implemented a training plan to operationalize the *Prevention of Family Violence Act*.	New measure: baseline data under development.

STRATEGIES

2.2.1 Increase education and awareness to service providers, stakeholders and the public on the *Protection Against Family Violence Act* at the local level.
2.2.2 Work in partnership with Child and Family Services Authorities to develop and implement treatment programs for perpetrators, victims and children who witness family violence, and improve access to family violence shelters.
2.2.3 Implement new initiatives for the prevention and treatment of elder abuse.
2.2.4 Examine strategies to provide additional support to on-reserve agencies for reducing family violence through the women's shelters program.

Goal 2.3:
To continually improve the quality of service for children and youth and the competencies of care providers

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	TARGET
• Competent and skilled caregivers are available to provide safe environments for children and youth.	J. Percentage of day care staff with level 2 or 3 training credentials.	New measure: baseline data under development.
	K. Percentage of foster parents who complete the mandatory level of training.	100%
	L. Percentage of residential care staff who meet the certification standards.	100%

STRATEGIES

2.3.1 Ensure that children, youth and families receive services that support their well-being including programs which increase the capacity of parents to care effectively for their children.
2.3.2 Improve the Ministry's capacity to coordinate, support and review program evaluations and to use the results in the continuous improvement of services.
2.3.3 Support the development of continuous improvement in child protection services with First Nations delegated agencies.
2.3.4 Continue to improve Child Welfare services through Special Case Reviews and follow up on fatality inquiry recommendations.
2.3.5 Incorporate recommendations from the Youth Secretariat to develop early intervention services for youth in care.
2.3.6 Respond to recommendations from the Youth Secretariat to improve services to youth in care.
2.3.7 Implement competency based training model for child protection workers.
2.3.8 Evaluate and monitor performance of Ministry entities.
2.3.9 Collaborate with Ministry partners to develop financial practices information to assist in Ministry financial management.
2.3.10 Develop information systems and human resource strategies that support effective program delivery and management of services.

CORE BUSINESS 3: PROMOTING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

With the establishment of the Child and Family Services Authorities, the Ministry has a responsibility to involve and support communities in the delivery of services appropriate to their children, youth and families. This approach supports both the Community-based and Aboriginal Pillars. Working with the Child and Family Services Authorities, First Nations and Metis leadership, agencies and organizations, municipalities and Family and Community Support Services, the Ministry will encourage and support the development of family-friendly communities that are better able to identify and respond to the needs of their children, youth and families. Long-term outcomes include:

Strong children, youth and families are a priority for Albertans

- Albertans are aware of the issues faced by their children, youth and families

Communities are responsive to the diverse cultures, values and needs of children, youth and families

- Children, youth and families are connected to their family, community and culture

Goal 3.1:
To support communities to plan, design and deliver services appropriate to their children, youth and families

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	TARGET
• Communities have increased capacity to develop and deliver prevention and early intervention programs and services.	M. Number of municipalities participating in Family and Community Support services. N. Number and dollar value of early intervention programs operating under Child and Family Services Authorities and First Nations on-reserve.	Maintain or increase number of municipalities participating in Family and Community Support Services.

STRATEGIES

3.1.1 Continue to build and maintain working relationships with community partners and community-based service agencies through the Child and Family Services Authorities and Family and Community Support Services.
3.1.2 Continue to work with other ministries and entities to improve culturally appropriate services to Aboriginal children, youth and families.
3.1.3 Continue to provide program and enhanced financial support to Family and Community Support Services.
3.1.4 Continue to participate in the development and implementation of the Family and Community Support Services measures project.
3.1.5 Complete a Statutory Review of the *Children and Family Services Authority Act.*

Goal 3.2:
To support Aboriginal people to plan, design, implement, monitor and evaluate services in consultation with their communities

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	TARGET
• Aboriginal children, youth and families receive services appropriate to their culture.	O. Percentage of Aboriginal children receiving foster care services from Aboriginal foster homes.	35%
	P. Percentage of Aboriginal board members in each Child and Family Services Authority relative to the percentage of Aboriginal people in the Child and Family Services Authority's population.	Aboriginal CFSA Board representation proportional to, or greater than, the regional Aboriginal population.

STRATEGIES

3.2.1 Work with First Nations and Metis leadership, communities and organizations and other ministries to develop the capacity of First Nations and Metis communities (Aboriginal Policy Initiative, Strengthening Relationships).
3.2.2 Support and collaborate with Child Welfare delegated First Nations agencies to develop a performance measurement framework.
3.2.3 Support operations and governance capacity building for First Nations Agencies with delegated authority for child welfare, through the development and implementation of joint strategic workplans.
3.2.4 Continue to support the Alberta/Metis Framework Agreement Social Services Sub-Committee through joint planning and action.
3.2.5 Support the development of a culturally effective training model for First Nations delegated agencies.
3.2.6 Jointly develop and implement strategies to assist in establishing Aboriginal people as leaders in the design and delivery of initiatives for their children and families.

Goal 3.3:
To increase public understanding and knowledge of issues affecting children, youth and families

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	TARGET
• Increased awareness of the issues affecting children, youth and families.	Q. Percentage of respondents to a public awareness survey who indicate that they are aware of issues facing children and youth, and activities undertaken by the Ministry and its partners to address these issues.	New measure: baseline data under development.

STRATEGIES

3.3.1 Support regular provincial forums and public discussion to work towards the well being of children, youth and families.
3.3.2 Support increased knowledge of Ministry partners and the public about the work of First Nations agencies, and the needs of Aboriginal families, communities and service providers.
3.3.3 Work with the Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA) to increase the profile of the work of the Municipal/Provincial partnership to address preventive social services issues and opportunities.
3.3.4 Strengthen the knowledge dissemination role of the Ministry to ensure that up to date research results are used in service planning and shared with Albertans and community partners.
3.3.5 Continue to provide leadership in intergovernmental initiatives such as the National Children's Agenda and Early Childhood Development, which promote public understanding of issues affecting children, youth and families.

Goal 3.4:
To increase the involvement of children, youth, families and community partners of the Ministry in decision making

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	TARGET
• Children, youth and families have knowledge of the role and the services provided by the Children's Advocate.	R. Percentage of respondents report awareness of services provided by the Office of the Children's Advocate.	New measure: baseline data under development.
• Children, youth and families receive services that are influenced by community input.	S. Number of Child and Family Services Authorities who have a formal mechanism in place for community input and feedback.	100%
• Children, youth and families have opportunities to participate in decisions that affect them.	T. Percentage of survey respondents who access selected Ministry services that indicate that they participated in decisions that affect them.	New measure: baseline data under development.

STRATEGIES

3.4.1 Support the Youth Secretariat as a mechanism through which issues affecting youth can be identified and addressed.
3.4.2 Encourage active, meaningful youth participation in Ministry decision-making by establishing Youth Forums.
3.4.3 Strengthen the involvement of First Nations and Metis people in Ministry policy development.
3.4.4 Develop partnerships/strategic alliances with corporations and philanthropic organizations.
3.4.5 Continue to support the Office of the Children's Advocate while exploring the implementation of recommendations from the review of the mandate of the Children's Advocate Office.
3.4.6 Continue leadership of the Great Kids Awards Program.

CORPORATE STRATEGIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Through its corporate strategies and partnerships both within the Ministry and across Government, Children's Services will implement strategies to ensure our resources are used effectively to improve services and outcomes for Alberta children, youth and families. These ministry-wide corporate strategies support the successful achievement of Ministry goals and core businesses, as well as our ability to accomplish future business plan goals and responsibilities. Corporate partnerships also support a number of key cross ministry initiatives aimed at ensuring that the Alberta government is efficient, effective, open and accountable. The following long-term outcome supports all three Ministry core businesses:

ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES SUPPORT DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Appropriate resources will be provided to support effective service delivery within communities by the Ministry and its Partners, including:

- Strengthening the Ministry Accountability Framework
- Training for service providers
- Information systems to monitor results
- Infrastructure required to deliver services
- Appropriate funding to meet priorities

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Ministry will support enhancement of the skills and knowledge of Ministry staff through professional development and learning opportunities, and address the recognition and retention of high quality service providers in the Ministry and other agencies working with children, youth and families. In accordance with the government Corporate Human Resource Development Strategy, recruitment and retention of qualified, well-trained and experienced staff continues to be a priority throughout the province.

GOVERNANCE

Governance is defined as the exercise of authority, direction and control. Supporting effective and accountable delivery of child and family services through a community-based governance model will be the focus for the statutory review of the *Child and Family Services Authorities (CFSA) Act.* This model will ensure efficient and effective delivery of services while respecting the Minister's responsibility under the government's accountability framework. The review will also be the focus of the Ministry's relationships with other delegated authorities and Family and Community Support Services.

FUNDING ALLOCATION MODEL REVIEW

The Ministry will be establishing a process that involves Child and Family Services Authorities in a comprehensive review of the population-needs based funding allocation model to ensure that it is meeting its objectives in the fair and equitable distribution of provincial funding to Authorities. The review will support fiscal responsibility and accountability as well as the effective allocation of resources to address community priorities.

SHARING INFORMATION ABOUT BEST PRACTICES

The Ministry will create processes for identifying, sharing, implementing and monitoring best practices in the delivery of services to children, youth and families. Children's Services will be on the forefront of issues impacting children, youth and families and to work with our partners within Alberta and across Canada to develop new ways of doing business that integrate preventive approaches into all services and programs delivered by the Ministry. In the intergovernmental arena, Alberta advances its positions and best practices in order to promote child and youth well-being within its jurisdictional responsibilities.

TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

The delivery of children's services has undergone significant change with the implementation of eighteen Child and Family Services Authorities, and the creation of the Ministry of Children's Services. The Ministry will develop information systems and strategies that support effective management and accountability, and reporting on results within the overall Corporate Information Management/Information Technology Strategy of Government.

STANDARDS AND MONITORING

Standards must fit within the accountability framework for Children's Services in an atmosphere of continuous improvement and best practices. The development of a revised/new Provincial Standards Document is a priority for the Ministry. The Provincial Standards will also establish monitoring requirements, responsibilities and mechanisms for monitoring and associated reporting.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Children's Services has achieved significant results for children, youth and families over the past year. There is a need to ensure that Ministry performance measurement reflects these results and challenges the Ministry to continue to improve services. The Ministry engages a number of stakeholders to establish meaningful and effective performance measures. These stakeholders include Child and Family Services Authorities, Family and Community Support Services, the First Nations and Metis agencies, communities and organizations and other Ministries involved in Alberta Children's and Youth Initiative.

POLICY RESEARCH, EVALUATION AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Through policy research and program evaluation initiatives, the Ministry will support evidence-based decisions and program policy development. In partnership with our academic and service delivery partners, we will generate, disseminate and utilize quality policy research to inform the work done by the Ministry. The Ministry will work with partners and stakeholders to identify research priorities, and ensure that issues impacting Alberta children, youth and families are identified and addressed in a proactive and preventive manner.

Expense by Core Business

(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable 1999-2000 Actual	Comparable 2000-01 Budget	Comparable 2000-01 Prelim. Actual	2001-02 Estimates	2002-03 Target	2003-04 Target
EXPENSE						
Core Business						
Promoting the development and well-being of children, youth and families	184,572	188,998	214,064	234,345	248,572	251,430
Keeping children, youth and families safe and protected	262,703	285,652	305,799	323,652	343,969	347,735
Promoting healthy communities for children, youth and families	58,990	64,203	67,205	89,601	92,236	92,398
MINISTRY EXPENSE	506,265	538,853	587,068	647,598	684,777	691,563

Ministry Statement of Operations

(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable 1999-2000 Actual	Comparable 2000-01 Budget	Comparable 2000-01 Prelim. Actual	2001-02 Estimates	2002-03 Target	2003-04 Target
REVENUE						
Internal Governmental Transfers	1,000	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
Transfers from Government of Canada	80,966	85,554	97,352	108,518	121,752	131,147
Investment Income	24	25	-	-	-	-
Other Revenue	7,803	6,750	8,400	8,996	8,996	8,996
MINISTRY REVENUE	89,793	93,529	106,952	118,714	131,948	141,343
EXPENSE						
Program						
Ministry Support Services	11,682	11,867	13,125	15,989	16,189	16,439
Services to Children and Families:						
Program Support Services	23,602	29,889	38,985	47,956	48,842	49,649
Child Welfare	288,633	314,057	330,749	338,599	362,099	366,028
Children with Disabilities	44,614	41,338	54,682	55,106	60,106	61,106
Day Care	64,437	64,084	64,786	67,656	70,656	71,156
Early Intervention Services	19,793	20,445	25,098	53,172	54,765	54,965
Prevention of Family Violence	10,703	11,517	11,967	13,629	14,629	14,729
Protection of Children involved in Prostitution	2,372	2,600	3,600	5,600	5,600	5,600
Financial Benefits for Children in Need	2,866	3,300	3,300	3,500	3,300	3,300
Fetal Alcohol Initiative	615	1,000	2,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Family and Community Support Services	36,390	37,819	37,839	42,641	44,641	44,641
Valuation Adjustments and Other Provisions	558	937	937	750	950	950
MINISTRY EXPENSE	506,265	538,853	587,068	647,598	684,777	691,563
Gain (Loss) on Disposal of Capital Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-
NET OPERATING RESULT	(416,472)	(445,324)	(480,116)	(528,884)	(552,829)	(550,220)

Consolidated Net Operating Result

(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable 1999-2000 Actual	Comparable 2000-01 Budget	Comparable 2000-01 Prelim. Actual	2001-02 Estimates	2002-03 Target	2003-04 Target
Ministry Revenue	89,793	93,529	106,952	118,714	131,948	141,343
Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments	(1,000)	(1,200)	(1,200)	(1,200)	(1,200)	(1,200)
Consolidated Revenue	88,793	92,329	105,752	117,514	130,748	140,143
Ministry Program Expense	506,265	538,853	587,068	647,598	684,777	691,563
Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments	-	-	-	-	-	-
Consolidated Program Expense	**506,265**	**538,853**	**587,068**	**647,598**	**684,777**	**691,563**
Gain (Loss) on Disposal of Capital Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-
CONSOLIDATED NET OPERATING RESULT	(417,472)	(446,524)	(481,316)	(530,084)	(554,029)	(551,420)